

# Monty & Eltham

## The Catholic Parishes of St Francis Xavier & Our Lady Help of Christians



We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay respect to the elders past, present and emerging of the Kulin Nation.

### Homily - Terry

One of my favorite stories is the story of the Old Well. It is the story of a well providing water for a family who lived in a fairly basic farmhouse each Summer. The farmhouse had no electricity and few, if any of the comforts of the modern home. The Old Well stood just outside the front door. The water from this well was unusually cold and pure and a joy to drink, and the well was remarkable because it never ran dry. Even in the severest summer droughts, this Old Well yielded up cool, clear water.

The family's financial situation improved over time and it was decided to modernize the farmhouse. Electricity replaced the kerosene lamps and modern plumbing and running water were installed. This meant a modern well was drilled 100 metres or so from the house. The Old Well was no longer needed. It was sealed over, but not removed, in case it should ever be required.

Some years later a member of the family, moved by curiosity and old loyalties, decided to uncover the Old Well. As he removed the cover, he expected to see the same dark, cool moist depths. But to his shock, the well was bone dry.

He inquired as to what had happened and was told that a well of this kind was fed by hundreds of tiny underground rivulets, along which seeps a constant supply of water. As water is drawn from the well, more water moves into it along the rivulets, keeping these tiny apertures clear and open. But when such a well is not used, and the water is not regularly drawn, the tiny rivulets close up. The Old Well which had run without failing for so many years, was dry not because there was no water, but because it had not been used.

It is an interesting story, and it can be a parable of the spiritual life, of the human soul. What happened to the Old Well can happen to us, if we cover up our lives and lose connection with the source of our spiritual lives. How many of us feel like that Old Well, bone dry?

In a way this is where today's Gospel leads us. To connect with the source of our lives. We listen to Jesus say, 'I am the true vine... Make your home in me as I make mine in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, neither can you unless you remain in me.'

The Risen Christ is the true vine, the source of our life. For us who follow the Christian way, Jesus is the living water of God sending rivulets of nourishment and hope into our lives, enriching them with his presence. Jesus, the Risen Christ is the life-giving presence of God for us at Eucharist when we come to take, to eat and drink of his very life.

When we become bone dry, it is not because God is dead. God is not dead. What's happened is that we have lost connection, perhaps through covering up our lives with other priorities. Or we are overwhelmed by grief, pain, illness, hurt, or tragedy. Our lives become out of balance and we cover up the well of our hearts, to protect them. Yet these can be the very times for us to reflect and recognize God sending rivulets of life, hope and peace into us.

Today we do well to look into the heart of our lives. Many of us will see that our lives require a balance, or a centre where we connect with the source of our lives. Prayer, reflection, Eucharist are important ways for us to find this centre in the Risen Christ, the true vine, our true home.



*This parish has a commitment to ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people in our community.*

*For more information visit [pol.org.au/eltham](http://pol.org.au/eltham) or [pol.org.au/montmorency](http://pol.org.au/montmorency).*

*We support the recommendations of the Royal Commission into institutional abuse and pray for all the survivors.*



## PARISH TEAM & INFORMATION



*Let us pray for all those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith ...*

### OUR PEOPLE & OUR CONTACT DETAILS



#### Parish Priests

Terry Kean - Pastor in Solidum

[terry.kean@cam.org.au](mailto:terry.kean@cam.org.au)

Michael Sierakowski - Moderator

[michael.sierakowski@cam.org.au](mailto:michael.sierakowski@cam.org.au)

Barry Caldwell

#### Parish Office

86 Mayona Road

9435 2178

Mon - Fri 9am-3pm

[montmorency@cam.org.au](mailto:montmorency@cam.org.au)

Kate Kogler:

Parish Secretary

[eltham@cam.org.au](mailto:eltham@cam.org.au)

Peter Williams:

Child Safety Officer

[SFX&OLHC.ChildSafety@cam.org.au](mailto:SFX&OLHC.ChildSafety@cam.org.au)

Website:

[www.pol.org.au/montmorency](http://www.pol.org.au/montmorency)

[www.pol.org.au/eltham](http://www.pol.org.au/eltham)

(pol stands for Parish OnLine)

Facebook:

St Francis Xavier Parish Montmorency

Monty & Eltham Newsletter & Facebook items:

[eltham@cam.org.au](mailto:eltham@cam.org.au)

#### Schools

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Principal: Philip Cachia: 9435 8474

[principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au)

[www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au](http://www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au)

Holy Trinity Primary School

Principal: Vince Bumpstead: 9431 0888

[principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au)

[www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au](http://www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au)

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Acting Principal: Therese Stewart: 9439 7824

[school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au](mailto:school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au)

[www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au](http://www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au)

#### Collections: 25 April 2021

| Community | Thanks-giving | Presbytery | Easter Offering | Project Compassion |
|-----------|---------------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| OLHC      | \$461.00      | \$691.65   | \$500.00        | \$270.00           |
| SFX       | \$819.15      | \$1,103.05 |                 | \$104.20           |



Please help our parish continue our important pastoral activities.

You can give an offering online today with CDFpay.

Find our parish by visiting:

<https://bit.ly/CDFpayEltham> or <https://bit.ly/CDFpayMontmorency>

#### Montmorency

For the recently deceased:

*Brian Sheehan* - husband of Carol, father-in-law of Danielle and Christian & Cara, Pa to Henry. You will be greatly missed.

*Rino Tessarotto*

*Victoria Veda*

*Dr Bernie Neville*

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

*Barbara Leary, Anthony Posar*

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

*Debbie Edgley (nee Vanderwert), Estelle Levy*

#### Eltham

For the recently deceased:

*Bryan Gillard*

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

*Violetta, Denice Donnellan*

*Lidia Marazzato, Tom Nolan, Christine Scott,*

*Ibyszek Wojciechowski, Sylvek Zyleviczc*

To include an anniversary please contact Parish House

9435 2178 or [eltham@cam.org.au](mailto:eltham@cam.org.au).

#### RECONCILIATION

available upon request

please call the Parish Office 9435 2178

#### *Mother's Day*

Mother's day is next weekend. It's a very special day as we all love our mums to bits even if they are no longer physically with us. The Montmorency conference of St Vincent de Paul (SVDP) have a number of small booklets which may be of interest to parishioners and their families. Here are just a few of the new titles:

- *Prayers for Expectant Mothers - Blessing the Child Within*
- *Prayers for a New Mother*
- *Prayers of a Catholic Mother*
- *Celebrate Mothers – Prayers and reflections on Motherhood*
- *What Makes Mary Special*
- *Prayers for Grandparents*

**Please note the booklets are now located on the wall next to the front door.** Please feel free to browse these and other related booklets together with the many other topics of interest.

*A gold coin donation in either of the St Vincent de Paul boxes at the front or side entrance to the church will help defray costs.*

*Are you interested in becoming a volunteer with St Vincent de Paul through our conference, perhaps at our Vinnies shop in Briar Hill, or in some other administrative capacity? If so please contact Mike on 0417 221 245 or the Parish Office*



St Vincent de Paul Society

*good works*



## God Is Not Only “Over There”

Theme: [The Contemplative Call to Nature](#)

Sunday, April 18, 2021

Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM

## The Contemplative Call to Nature

### God Is Not Only “Over There”

The core message of the incarnation of God in Jesus is that the Divine Presence is here, in us and in all of creation, and not only “over there” in some far-off realm.

Indigenous religions largely understand this, as do some scriptures (see Daniel 3:57-82, or Psalms 98, 104 and 148). In Job 12:7-10 and most of Job 38-39, YHWH praises many strange animals and elements for their inherently available wisdom - the “pent-up sea”, the “wild ass”, the “ostrich’s wing” - reminding us humans that we are part of a much greater ecosystem. Creation offers lessons in all directions. “Is it by your wisdom,” God asks Job, and us by extension, “that the hawk soars, and spreads its wings to the south?” (Job 39:26). The obvious answer is no.

God is not bound by our commonly held presumption that humans are the centre of everything. Creation did not actually demand or need Jesus (or *us*, for that matter) to confer additional sacredness upon it. From the first moment of the Big Bang, nature was revealing the glory and goodness of the Divine Presence; it must be seen as a gratuitous gift. Jesus came to live in its midst, and enjoy life in all its natural variations, and thus be our model and exemplar. *Jesus is the gift that honoured the gift*, we might say.

Strangely, many Christians today limit God’s providential care to humans, and very few of them at that. How different we are from Jesus, who extended divine generosity to sparrows, lilies, ravens, donkeys, the grasses of the fields (Luke 12:24, 27-28), and even “the hairs of the head” (Matthew 10:30). No stingy God here! (Although God did neglect the hairs of *my* head.) But what stinginess on our side made us limit God’s concern - even eternal concern - to just ourselves and our group? And how can we imagine God as caring about us if God does not care about everything else too? If God chooses and doles out care, we are always insecure and unsure whether we are among the lucky recipients. Yet once we become aware of the generous, creative Presence that exists in all things by their very nature, we can honour the Indwelling Spirit as the Inner Source of all dignity and worthiness. Dignity is not doled out to the supposedly worthy. It grounds the inherent worthiness of things in their very nature and existence.

The true and essential work of all religion is to help us recognise and recover the divine image in everything. It is to mirror things correctly, deeply, and fully until all things know who they are. A mirror by its nature reflects impartially, equally, effortlessly, spontaneously, and endlessly. It does not produce the image, nor does it filter the image according to its perceptions or preferences. Authentic mirroring can only call forth what is already there.

## St Francis Xavier’s Parish - SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP

The present St Francis Xavier Parish Social Justice Group began in 2006. It met, every three weeks on a Tuesday evening, for almost fourteen years until the advent of Covid. This has been the third Social Justice Group that has existed in the parish and it has sought to operate as a forum for addressing social justice concerns and as a focus for social action. It has facilitated information evenings on many issues and has always looked for very practical ways for busy local people to make some response to often complex situations.

The group has always had magnificent support from both within St Francis Xavier’s Parish and also beyond. It has worked with other Catholic parishes nearby, other local churches, the Banyule Council, and local groups such as the Montmorency Community Group, the Montmorency Asylum Seekers Support Group and Welcome to Eltham. Schools in this area, both Catholic and non-Catholic, have advertised activities in their news bulletins and local traders have displayed posters.

The group has not met for over a year and several long-standing members are retiring, having given many years to the group’s activities. The current group is therefore discontinuing. There will no doubt always be social justice issues to address and, judging by the past, also many concerned and generous local people. Hopefully a new Social Justice Group will once again emerge.



*Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of India at this time...  
(excerpts from [abc.net.au](http://abc.net.au) article)*

## India's second coronavirus wave causing global 'crisis' as COVID-19 vaccine supplies disrupted

The global vaccine supply chain, already under extreme pressure, has been thrown into disarray by the COVID-19 crisis devastating India.

India is the world's biggest manufacturer of COVID-19 vaccines, and the Serum Institute of India had been earmarked to produce a third of the global supply of the AstraZeneca vaccine in 2021.

As India's healthcare system collapses under the second wave of infections, the Indian government has virtually halted vaccine exports, instead keeping supplies onshore to inoculate its own population.

"As India did that, the pipeline of vaccines dried up for COVAX," said Leena Menghaney from Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) based in New Delhi.

"I don't know who did the maths, but someone did the maths wrong," Ms Menghaney said.

"And the decision to go exclusively with the Serum Institute of India and not provide the licence to more manufacturers has proved deadly for the developing world."

Salim Abdool Karim is an epidemiologist at Columbia University and works on the vaccine rollout in Africa.



Several states in India have reported a shortage of coronavirus vaccine doses. (AP Photo: Rafiq Maqbool)

vaccinate at least 20 per cent of their population - frontline healthcare workers and their most vulnerable people. Prior to India's second wave, the scheme was already short on the number of doses it had delivered worldwide. Now, it will be further behind.

So far, India is about 80 million doses short of the total vaccines it had agreed to provide to other countries via COVAX - and this number too will grow, as long as the nation needs to prioritise domestic vaccinations.

"It's crazy that so many low-income countries should be relying on one vaccine manufacturer to supply just enough doses to vaccinate 20 per cent of their population," Deborah Gleeson, an associate professor in public health at La Trobe University, said.

"Drastic action needs to be taken to expand the production of vaccines globally."

When India began limiting the export of vaccines, the head of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said such moves could be "catastrophic" for African countries.

"If the delay [of vaccines from India] continues - I hope it's a delay and not a ban - that would be catastrophic for meeting our vaccination schedule," John Nkengasong, director of Africa CEDC, said at the start of April.

That delay has continued and is likely to continue for some time.



People wait in line for coronavirus vaccinations in Mumbai, which is recording thousands of new infections every day. (AP: Rajanish Kakade)

Africa has a population of about 1.3 billion people and is particularly dependent on COVAX. But Dr Abdool Karim said India was doing the right thing.

"I think the highest priority, you know, to be quite frank, has to be India," Dr Abdool Karim told ABC RN Breakfast this week.

"I mean, their situation is so desperate and the cases continue to rise.

"This is a crisis now at a global level," said Dr Abdool Karim, who is also on the Africa CDC's Taskforce for Novel Coronavirus.

Most of the world's population is reliant on vaccines distributed by COVAX - a collaboration of organisations, including the World Health Organisation, that was set up to share vaccines fairly around the world.

It had aimed to deliver 2 billion vaccines to about 140 mostly developing countries by the end of 2021 so they could



Medical oxygen supplies are also running low in India, making the need to vaccinate its population even more urgent. (AP: Altaf Qadri)

## Prayers of the Faithful for 2 May 2021

Celebrant: Let us gather and pray together in the presence of the Lord.

For the openness to listen and the confidence to change paths. We pray for those who feel isolated, disaffected, unable to face the challenge of change. May they find the encouragement and support to move forward. *We pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We remember all those who are unwillingly forced into change, uprooting family and communities in search of security and a new home. May they find welcome, empathy and ongoing support. *We pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

The Holy Spirit instilled our early church community with dynamism and courage. May that same spirit work within us today to challenge and enrich our lives with renewed optimism, faith and love. *We pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for our world so ravaged by the effects of Covid. May the Holy Spirit bring light, hope, compassion and outreach. We ask for the courage to trust in the constancy of your love. *We pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We thank God for the beauty and wonders of our world and recognise our personal responsibility to preserve and protect its fragility. We pray that our government may recognise its responsibility to develop forward thinking climate policies for future generations. *We pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

May we always feel the presence of the Lord even when words fail us. May we reach out and care for others. May we feel confident that the Lord knows the big picture and place our trust in him. *We pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the sick, their families and carers. We pray for the warmth, patience and comfort of your love. *We pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who have died recently, including Bryan Gillard, Dr Bernie Neville, Brian Sheehan, Rino Tessarotto and Victoria Veda; and those whose anniversaries occur around this time, including Barbara Leary and Anthony Posar. We pray for the peace and love of the Lord. *We pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Celebrant: Dear Lord, may our lives be deepened by the sense of your constant presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

### Help for marriages under stress:

The BreakThrough Online Course created by SmartLoving will enable you to identify your conflict triggers, learn strategies to de-escalate an argument and find constructive ways to re-establish connection. Restore hope for your relationship's future.

Visit: [smartloving.org/breakthrough](https://smartloving.org/breakthrough)

Divine Mercy Discount - 50% | until 10 May 2021.



| ROSTERS:              |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| week ending 9 May     |                       |
| <b>Montmorency</b>    |                       |
| Davidson, John        | PRYR                  |
| French, Jossie        | W8:30                 |
| Hannon, Kevin & Genni | ASRC                  |
| Kulkens, Mark         | W8:30                 |
| <b>Eltham</b>         |                       |
| Armstrong, Miranda    | Reader                |
| Dopheide, Marlis      | Commentator           |
| Frediani, Gabriella   | Altar Society         |
| Scannell Family       | Pilgrim Rosary Statue |

## Monty & Eltham Calendar of Events

### **Saturday 1 May**

6:00pm Mass (160 people) & confirmations Montmorency

### **Sunday 2**

8:30am Mass (160 people) & confirmations Montmorency

10:00am Mass (160 people) & confirmations Eltham

12:00pm Baptisms Eltham

### **Monday 3**

11:00am Funeral: Rino Tessarotto Montmorency

### **Tuesday 4**

9:30am Mass (160 people) Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group Montmorency

11:00am Funeral: Bryan Gillard Eltham

### **Wednesday 5**

6:30am Meditation Montmorency

9:30am Mass (160 people) Eltham

11:00am Funeral: Brian Sheehan Montmorency

12:00pm Gina's farewell Montmorency RSL

### **Thursday 6**

9:30am Mass (160 people) Montmorency

10:30am ASRC food collection & delivery Montmorency

### **Friday 7**

9:30am Mass (160 people) Eltham

10:30am Funeral: Victoria Veda Montmorency

6:30pm Memorial Mass: Brooke Coskun Montmorency

### **Saturday 8**

11:00am Baptism: Oliver Eltham

6:00pm Mass (160 people) & confirmations Montmorency

### **Sunday 9**

8:30am Mass (160 people) & confirmations Montmorency

10:00am Mass (160 people) & confirmations Eltham

12:00pm Baptisms: Gordon, Amara, Niah Montmorency

### **Monday 10**

9:30am Days for Girls Montmorency

### **Tuesday 11**

9:30am Mass (160 people) Montmorency

### **Wednesday 12**

6:30am Meditation Montmorency

9:30am Mass (160 people) Eltham

### **Thursday 13**

9:30am Mass (160 people) Montmorency

10:30am ASRC food collection & delivery Montmorency

### **Friday 14**

9:30am Mass (160 people) Eltham

### **Saturday 15**

6:00pm Mass (160 people) & confirmations Montmorency

### **Sunday 16 - The Ascension of the Lord**

8:30am Mass (160 people) & confirmations Montmorency

## *Fr Terry's 50 years of Ordination*

Here is the update...

As mentioned in last week's bulletin, there will be 3 events and 3 Masses where we will be able to gather to congratulate Terry on his amazing milestone of 50 years a Priest.

The weekend will be 22nd/23rd May, the Feast of Pentecost. Terry will be celebrating the three Masses on that weekend.

There will also be 3 events where we may gather for Terry's 50th. Two lunches at 12 noon at the Montmorency RSL to be held on Tuesday 25th May and Friday 28th May. Please call the Montmorency RSL on 9434 2085 to book in to *one* of the 'lunch time with Fr Terry' events.

On Sunday 23rd May there will be an event from 5pm to 8pm at the Montmorency RSL which can *only* be booked online by click the following trybooking link:

<https://www.trybooking.com/754475>.

**Bookings for all of these events will open on Monday 3 May at 9am and will close at midnight Monday 17 May, unless booked out before then.**

If you are having difficulty with any of the above, or questions of another nature, please call Noel (0421 016 105), Vinka (0418 345 954), Patsy (0429 439 675), Mary O'Connor (9439 5921), Barbara Bibby (9439 8594) or see us after Mass.

With Covid restrictions still in place, and with consideration for others, we would ask you attend only 1 of these 3 events. God willing, Terry will be with us till November, I am sure there will be plenty of opportunities along the way to give him our best wishes and convey to him our gratitude.

## Invitation to all Parishioners

We invite you all to join us to celebrate  
with *Gina*

at a farewell lunch at *Montmorency RSL*  
on 5<sup>th</sup> **May** at 12 noon.

Please put your name and contact number  
on the sign-up sheet on the table in the foyer of  
the OLHC church.

Donations for a gift for Gina will be accepted.

For more information contact  
Sheilah: 0415 040 800, or  
Mary O'Connor: 9439 5921

F a r e w e l l

St Francis Xavier  
Catholic Primary School  
Montmorency

**2022  
ENROLMENTS  
NOW OPEN**

JOIN OUR NEXT PRINCIPAL LED SCHOOL TOUR  
BY CALLING OUR REGISTRAR ON **9435 8474**

>> OUR EDUCATIONAL PACKAGE IS UNSURPASSED <<

- ✓ 7 SPECIALIST TEACHING AREAS EACH WEEK FOR PREP - YEAR 6
- ✓ INTERVENTION SUPPORT (ENGLISH/MATHS) AT ALL LEVELS
- ✓ STEPHANIE ALEXANDER KITCHEN GARDEN
- ✓ VISUAL ARTS
- ✓ L.O.T.E. MANDARIN
- ✓ PERFORMING ARTS
- ✓ S.L.E.M.
- ✓ SCHOOL CHAPLAIN / COUNSELLOR
- ✓ DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY (COMPUTERS)
- ✓ DISCOVERY CENTRE (LIBRARY)
- ✓ PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**TOGETHER WE  
CAN ACHIEVE  
ANYTHING**

www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au



Enrol Now

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

**EVERY DAY IS  
OPEN DAY**

1-13 Henry Street Eltham, 3095 | 9439 7824 | principal@olhaltham.catholic.edu.au

**Palms Australia**  
Reach Beyond

**Enquire Now!**

Share your skills to help develop the capacity of overseas organisations and the abilities of their people. Low-income communities seek sustainable solutions to poverty, not through money or gifts, but by building self-reliance. All trades and professions are called to assist this mission.



[Enquire now](#) to properly prepare for a placement in 2022.

Join our online [InfoZoom](#) on 2 May, visit [palms.org.au](http://palms.org.au), or call Palms now on 02 9560 5333



**Congratulations to  
all who celebrate  
their sacraments this weekend:**

**Saturday 1 May**

*St Francis Xavier, 6pm*

|                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Benjamin Munding    | Confirmation |
| Archie McHugh       | Confirmation |
| Matthew D'Amico     | Confirmation |
| Alexander Griffiths | Confirmation |

**Sunday 2 May**

*St Francis Xavier, 8:30am*

|                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| Sabrina Battiato | Confirmation |
| Dean Incani      | Confirmation |
| Amelia Holovka   | Confirmation |
| John Hallissey   | Confirmation |

*Our Lady Help of Christians, 10am*

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Cayla Chua        | Confirmation |
| Louis Sibul       | Confirmation |
| Mischka Sibul     | Confirmation |
| Jacob Wilberforce | Confirmation |
| Chad Ravello      | Confirmation |
| Eric Rechichi     | Confirmation |

*Our Lady Help of Christians, 12 noon*

|               |         |
|---------------|---------|
| Alfred Hadley | Baptism |
|---------------|---------|



## Gospel - John 15:1-8

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to make it bear even more. You are pruned already, by means of the word that I have spoken to you. Make your home in me, as I make mine in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, but must remain part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is like a branch that has been thrown away - he withers; these branches are collected and thrown on the fire, and they are burnt. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask what you will and you shall get it. It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit, and then you will be my disciples.'



## Reflection

Given the importance of vineyards and grape-growing in the world of the Old Testament, it is no surprise that the image of the vine looms large as a symbol for Israel. The prophets Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel all played with it, as does Jesus in a number of parables. Here in the gospel of John he identifies himself as the "true vine" and his disciples as its branches.

It is an image pregnant with meaning. It has connotations of life, growth, fruitfulness and unity, plus their contraries. This section of Jesus' farewell discourse makes reference to themes elaborated on elsewhere: the word of God, dwelling in Jesus, the power of prayer, the glory of God.

Jesus' reflections do not proceed in a straight line. It may be best to think of them in terms of a spiral, as words and ideas suggest others that lead us more and more deeply into the mystery. As much as they affirm the profound union of life that the Christian community shares with Jesus, they also serve to warn of the dangers of breaking fellowship with him.

This is serious teaching that needs to be delivered with a wise combination of warmth and forthrightness.

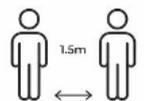
**Break Open the Word 2021**

## CovidSafety during Mass:



- Please carry an appropriate **face covering** at all times - and use it when necessary;

- Please **socially distance 1.5m** ( families not included ) for appropriate spacing;



- Please **record your presence** via: QR Code on your phone, or on paper, this is essential for Record Keeping and if necessary, tracing and numbers;
- Please use **Hand Sanitiser** provided or other personal appropriate cleaning agent.



Please note that Density Regulations allow for **160 people** in the Churches of St. Francis Xavier and Our Lady Help of Christians.